

**McLaughlin Youth Center Renovation to Meet Safety and Security Needs, Phase 1**

**FY2009 Request: \$19,503,700**  
**Reference No: 41336**

**AP/AL:** Appropriation

**Project Type:** Renovation and Remodeling

**Category:** Health/Human Services

**Location:** Anchorage Area-wide

**Contact:** Arnold Liebelt

**House District:** Anchorage Area-wide (HD 17-32)

**Contact Phone:** (907)465-1870

**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2008 - 06/30/2013

**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

In the summer of 2007, a study was commissioned to identify significant safety and security breaches within Juvenile Justice's four oldest facilities. The Department's plan for correcting safety and security problems spans a six-year period. This request will fund recommended renovations for McLaughlin Youth Center. The study has recommended the need to renovate several areas of MYC. The first phase would include construction of a new outdoor recreation area and a new detention unit, relocation of the parking area, and remodeling the intensive treatment unit. Phases 2 - 4 would occur in FY12 - 14.

<b>Funding:</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>FY2010</b>	<b>FY2011</b>	<b>FY2012</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>	<b>Total</b>
Gen Fund	\$19,503,700			\$18,435,319	\$12,081,208	\$22,406,641	\$72,426,868
Total:	\$19,503,700	\$0	\$0	\$18,435,319	\$12,081,208	\$22,406,641	\$72,426,868

☐ State Match Required    ☐ One-Time Project    ☒ Phased - new    ☐ Phased - underway    ☐ On-Going  
0% = Minimum State Match % Required    ☐ Amendment    ☐ Mental Health Bill

**Operating & Maintenance Costs:**

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

**Additional Information / Prior Funding History:**

This is the first year of the project.

**Project Description/Justification:**

The McLaughlin Youth Center was recently part of an assessment study performed on the Division of Juvenile Justice's four oldest youth facilities. The other three were the Johnson Youth Center in Juneau, the Bethel Youth Facility, and the Fairbanks Youth Facility. The study was commissioned to identify safety and security breaches within these facilities. The consultant provided a summary of findings, recommendations, and estimated construction costs for each deficiency for each facility. The plan will be finalized in December of 2007.

In 1997, the Department completed its first *Master Plan for Youth Facilities*. The plan was instrumental in securing funds for expanding services and bed capacity in various communities. As a result of the plan, new youth facilities were constructed in Ketchikan, Mat-Su, and Kenai, and additional treatment or detention beds were added in Johnson Youth Center and McLaughlin Youth Center. Whereas the Master Plan focused on the need for beds in specific communities, this second plan focuses on the safety and security needs of the four oldest youth facilities in the state. The threats to safety and security result from aging infrastructure, overcrowding, and an increase in behavioral health issues. The Department's plan for addressing the safety and security spans a six-year period, starting with FY2009. If funds are appropriated as requested, the Division of Juvenile Justice will be in a position to address the needs of the state's incarcerated youth for years to come. The funding plan for the next six years is as follows:

Threat to Safety and Security: An Assessment of Security Needs for Alaska's Juvenile Correctional Facilities – Six Year Plan

<b>Facility</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2010</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>
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<b>McLaughlin</b>	\$19,503,736	-	-	\$18,435,319	\$12,081,208	\$22,406,641
<b>Johnson</b>	\$9,053,847	-	\$743,856	-	\$2,913,655	\$4,456,847
<b>Fairbanks</b>	-	-	-	\$10,864,547	\$14,157,967	-
<b>Bethel</b>	-	\$29,271,150	\$25,024,993	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$28,557,582</b>	<b>\$29,271,150</b>	<b>\$25,768,849</b>	<b>\$29,299,866</b>	<b>\$29,152,830</b>	<b>\$26,863,488</b>

The McLaughlin Youth Center (MYC) is located in Anchorage and is the State's oldest and largest place of juvenile incarceration. As such, the staff is able to offer programs, counseling and controlled environments that are not cost-effective in smaller facilities. In this way MYC provides a central resource for the detained and adjudicated youngsters from Southcentral Alaska, as well as specialized services for other regions of the State. Some of the youth at MYC are transferred there because of behavioral health issues they exhibit at the smaller facilities that don't have the staffing for one-on-one supervision. One result of this group of young offenders is the unusually high level of health, life safety and security precautions that must be provided to protect the residents, staff and surrounding neighborhood. Specific threats include the high rate of suicide amongst Alaskan adolescents, particularly amongst those suffering from mental illness, the aggressive behavior between some residents and between some residents and staff, and the potential for gang activity and its associated violence amongst residents and the constant threat of violent acts against residents outside the fence. Recent campus shooting and failed bomb attacks exemplify the level of violence that must be prevented from occurring again on the McLaughlin Youth Center campus.

The Facility population figures for FY2007 showed the Average Daily Population for MYC to be 128 - 108 males and 20 females. The average daily population for Detention was 46 and the average daily population for Treatment was 82. The average daily population for the Community Detention Unit was 20.

The structures posing the greatest safety threat are 40 years old and simply worn out and need significant upgrade. In some cases security components do not consistently lock cell doors, and staff are unable to view isolated corners or release emergency exit doors. There are cases where pipes and light fixtures are accessible to residents who could tie off clothing or sheets with the intent to commit suicide. Some of the oldest housing units are not able to maintain temperatures that are habitable in the winter and below 90° F in the summer. In these same units, raw sewage backs up and floods the area. This adds additional stress to an existing volatile situation.

For the first 30 years MYC served the State without a perimeter fence. At the time, it was believed the risk of flight was less serious than the emotional impact of sentencing children to live within a secure compound. Over the years, the community has gradually expanded to surround the MYC campus. This encroachment, coupled with the increase in violence and severe mental health problems plaguing our youth, demanded greater security and ultimately a 12-foot security fence was installed. The fence system was designed to enclose and secure the obvious and major escape routes. The fence has met its intended purpose; however there continues to be a number of key locations that need enhancements to the original system to prevent potentially dangerous individuals from escaping into the surrounding neighborhoods and campuses.

The staff working at MYC has a deep and finely honed understanding of adolescent behavior. This resource coupled with the well developed programs available at MYC provides a nearly perfect background for other organizations and departments to offer their services on the MYC campus. These programs are provided daily at MYC to non-adjudicated youngsters. These perfectly logical decisions place kids off the street into the secure, highly disciplined MYC environment. Providing non-adjudicated youth counseling and direction is definitely providing the community with a critically needed service. Unfortunately, the influences brought onto the campus by youth who are outside the system most of the day bring a host of problems and contraband materials onto the secure campus. In addition to the expected drugs, a pistol was recently found hidden in a space that is accessible to residents. This serious breach of security must never be allowed to be repeated. Establishment of a new structure outside the secure perimeter at MYC for these services is needed. The Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) would be occupied by programs delivered in conjunction with non-profit agencies such as the Boys and Girls Club, the Anchorage School District, and other MYC programs for counseling after probation. Construction of the JJC is the only way to guarantee separation between adjudicated and non-adjudicated youth.

The following phases were broken down by cost and program. Since MYC is fully operational, relocating staff and youth while construction occurs was a major determining factor on how the overall project needs to be phased.

**Phase I – FY2009**

Develop and screen new outdoor recreation area north and east of the existing Treatment Unit (ITU). Two areas are needed - one would be a secure outdoor recreation yard and the other would be an area of refuge to contain residents from the gym or ITU	\$2,003,513
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in the event of a fire. Currently, these areas release residents to the street when the fire alarm is activated.	
Develop new parking for probation, detention, and the new Juvenile Justice Center. This parking is needed to replace those stalls lost when the site property boundaries were re-established, and to replace lost parking as a result of the new secure outdoor areas (above).	\$1,849,781
Construct a new 25-bed detention unit in the existing recreation yard. This building will replace the current 1967 detention unit. When complete, locate ITU here until existing ITU is renovated.	\$8,681,473
Remodel the existing 20 year-old Intensive Treatment Unit. Move ITU back into renovated space. Move Detention II into new space after ITU leaves. Renovate Detention II into medical suite and training. This project is needed to provide a safe environment with better observation and supervision, and more staff interface with the residents. With the expanding need for mental health clinicians, a space for a clinician is being created in the ITU unit. Infractions of ADA, OSHA, HIPAA, International Building Code, and health standards are prevalent in the current confined space.	\$6,968,968
<b>Total for Phase 1 – FY 2009</b>	<b>\$19,503,736</b>
<b>Phase 2 – FY 2012</b>	
Construct Juvenile Justice Center (JJC). Move probation and community based programs into JJC. The JJC is needed for programs for non-adjudicated youth who are at risk. The new building will also house programs that are currently in, or immediate adjacent to, secure portions of the MYC campus. The proximity of free and detained youngsters is a serious safety concern and has resulted in the introduction of contraband, such as drugs and firearms, into the facility.	\$18,435,319
<b>Total for Phase 2 – FY2012</b>	<b>\$18,435,319</b>
<b>Phase 3 – FY2013</b>	
Remodel the north portion of the old probation building into meeting and training space for the Juvenile Justice Center.	\$813,654
Remodel south and west probation space to be used as the screening area for Probation, the Juvenile Justice Center and Detention (intake). The project also includes containing an open court yard adjacent to Detention I for use as the police intake sally port. This secure controlled environment will use the existing "north hall" cells as intake holding cells. Move cottage program space from Cottage 2 to Cottage 1.	\$1,017,067
Add new intake to existing detention 1. Move Cottage 3 residents into new Cottage 2.	\$680,369
Renovate Cottage 3 to serve as a boy's treatment unit. The renovation will increase staff and resident security by incorporating cell lockdown capability, improve observation, and increased functional program and day spaces. When complete the Cottage 4 residents will be moved into the new Cottage 3.	\$9,570,118
<b>Total for Phase 3 – FY2013</b>	<b>\$12,081,208</b>
<b>Phase 4 – FY2014</b>	
Renovate Cottage 4 to serve as a boy's Treatment Unit. This cottage is to be the same as the renovated Cottage 3 project above. Move Cottage 2 residents into Cottage 4.	\$10,033,188
Renovate Cottage 2 to serve as a program space for the Treatment residents. Cottage 2 currently functions as an inefficient, difficult-to-manage program unit. Renovation to improve visual monitoring and supervision as well as creating counseling and activity spaces will provide for more useful and safer space.	\$10,033,188

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Renovate Cottage 1 as a new screening center for the Treatment Program. A small addition to the existing administration building lobby connecting the two buildings will provide a secure screening position for treatment visitors. This small expansion will eliminate current access by visitors through the school. Construct a secure loading dock	\$1,303,096
Upgrade and improve the perimeter fence and create screen walls where vision onto the site is problematic. This project also will add several motion activated cameras to monitor the fence line, create an inaccessible 10-foot wide band just outside of the fence on the west side of the campus where encroaching properties and Laurel Street expose the facility to unwanted activity along the fence. Lastly, the upgrade includes a vegetation buffer to screen less sensitive areas where casual vision can be avoided through the use of less costly vegetation screening.	\$1,037,169
<b>Total for Phase 4 – FY2014</b>	<b>\$22,406,641</b>
<b>Total Project Cost – FY2009 through FY2014</b>	<b>\$72,426,904</b>

The young people who are ordered by the court to live in the State's youth facilities are placed there to mitigate their ability to harm other members of the community. While held, intense proactive counseling and individual programming is administered in an attempt to alter behavior patterns before they are ingrained as a way of life. If the institutions are not safe and the residents feel threatened, the Department simply cannot expect the therapeutic work to have any effect on these youngsters. It is imperative that these facilities be safe if we expect positive results to be realized from the staff's dedicated work.

The State's juvenile justice infrastructure is an important component of maintaining public safety and a last chance to habilitate our youth to be responsible members of their community. That investment not only protects our citizens today, but also reduces the threat tomorrow.

The statutory reference that is pertinent to this request: Sec. 47.14.100 Powers and Duties of department over care of child requires the Department to arrange for the care of every child committed to its custody.

Department's Mission: To Promote and Protect the Health and Well Being of Alaskans.

This project directly supports the Department's mission by creating safe and secure facilities for juvenile justice staff and incarcerated youth, as well as Alaskan communities.

The end result to which this project contributes is "Improve juvenile offenders' success in the community following completion of services resulting in higher levels of accountability and public safety."